DANCES

Annual Dance

The one general dance (*yimdgd*) of the year is hardly to be classed as religious, for it serves a social end, yet it is also a means of obtaining rain and prosperity. Certainly the pleasure element is uppermost for the majority of those attending. It is performed at the end of August or the beginning of September, when the harvest is gathered. At this time Navaho, Hopi, and Walapai visitors come to share the abundance and to trade, the several days of festivities furnishing the principal diversion of the year. In 1918 a somewhat impromptu affair was given on August eighteenth and a more extended dance in the middle of September lasting two days and nights; in 1919, the dance was held September twelfth to fifteenth occupying three nights and the intervening days. [527] [535] [789] [241] [648]

The dance of August 1918, although held by day, was typical, save in one respect, namely, that most of the active men and women were absent in attendance on a mourning ceremony given by the Walapai. The dance ground, a disputed tract in the middle of the village, was voluntarily cleared by some boys, who piled the brush about the edges; this was the only approach to an enclosure. People began to arrive in the early afternoon, the men congregating apart from their families. Curiously enough, although the women sat together they formed three slightly separated groups; those from camps 7–18 (see map, Fig. 50) were at the southern end, camps 44–53 at the north, with the families from the middle section of the village between. Clearly this was not only an expression of the relationships prevailing between neighbors, but also of a degree of cohesion among neighbors as such. The older men smoked; the younger played games of chance; the women, when not engaged in preparing food for the subsequent feast, prepared basketry material. By midafternoon the entire village, with the exception of a few old women attending the sick, had arrived. Sinyella thereupon directed that a space be cleared to receive the food, arranged part of it that the men might eat, and distributed the remainder among the groups of women and children. At its conclusion, Sinyella and Manakadja, the only chiefs present, rose from their places before the men and addressed a moral discourse to the women and children, stating as well, that although the dance had not been given for several years, on this occasion it should be resumed in its old form. At this time, the heat of the day abating, the dance commenced. [527] [571] [621] [648] [525] [574] [537] [183] [535]

1: Spier E-5 (1918) 1928
NT14 Plateau Yumans NT14
Havasupai

meals prepared for them. Blind Bert's relatives, including a newly 758
acquired son-in-law, helped him about at the dance. But in some cases, such attentions are short-lived as though people were impatient. Thus the real burden of Bert's care fell on his wife's shoulders, although he had adult children in the same camp. On the other hand, note Smyella's story of how he got shaman after shaman for his son (p. 280). Expressions of real concern for an ailing relative are by no means uncommon.

While the formal expression of sympathy for grief may take the form 152
of a forced wailing, real sympathy is certainly voiced. For example, 571
the men refrained for some time from using the customary sweatlodge, situated near the home of a man whose brother had recently died, because, as they said, the relatives were sad. The dead man's young son [736]
was treated with the greatest tenderness by his maternal grandparents, [603]
who now took charge of him.

Personal cleanliness is, I think, somewhat greater than among the 515
Zuñi and White Mountain Apache. Children spend summer days splash- [871]
ing in the creek, and men and women bathe in the sweatlodge and creek, somewhat indiscriminately. Men are not always careful to avoid ex- [834]
posure. Men are somewhat cleaner than women. Clothing is only in- [296]
frequently washed: women wear their cotton slips while in the creek. Not much lousing or scratching is seen.

Estimates of individual worth are based on abilities, yet here, as 554
always, values follow conventional standards. Chiefs become such by 624
prestige and renown based on their personal qualities (dignity, industry, and even temper), on their wisdom, bravery, and friendship with foreigners. A man who would otherwise inherit chieftainship, yet lacks these qualities, would fail of receiving it. Chiefs are not gauged on their hospitality or liberality. Three of the six chiefs are recognized as the best speech makers in the tribe; an evaluation which even an outsider must agree is just. Rock Jones, the shaman, is credited with being best acquainted with the folk-tales, as well as being the best raconteur.

One individual, a man of middle-age, is known as an habitual liar. 558
His veracity is held at such low value that no one repeats a statement of his without prefixing, "P—— said this." Captain Burro, now elderly, seems to have been a butt all his life. As a boy he was the subject of the smudge-punishment, as a young man his marksmanship was held in disdain, and today he suffers the jokes of the young men and the indifference of his peers.

Some women have reputations as basket makers. The criterion is 555
apparently regularity of stitch, although the best of Havasupai products is inferior in this regard.

775 time near those he knew in life. Relatives commonly witness signs that such a ghost is lurking about although they may not see him.

343 517 571 562 757 515 The Havasupai are confirmed users of the sweat lodge. While a sweat bath is regarded as therapeutic and the ritual used has supernatural connotation, the sweat lodge serves primarily as a place of assembly for men who make a social occasion of such gatherings, visiting, joking, and discussing tribal affairs. Few women use the sweat lodge, and when one does so, it is usually in company with her husband or another woman.

Mission Activity

797 Early Christian influences in Supai seem to have been negligible. The Episcopal Church sent missionaries on infrequent visits to the canyon, beginning in 1927. A resident nurse, a devout Christian, held prayer meetings and Sunday School in the school building for several years during the 1930's. In 1939, the Episcopal Church formally recognized its "newest mission among the Havasupai," placing the Rev. Cecil Harris in charge (Jenkins, n.d.). Monthly meetings with the aid of interpreters were held in Supai, and Jim Crook, a recent Havasupai convert to Christianity, held Sunday School during the Rev. Harris' absence. After attending Cook Christian Training School for Indians in Phoenix for four years, beginning in 1940, Jim Crook became an evangelist, but he has been inactive in recent years.

In 1948, the Episcopal Church obtained from Jim Crook some land on the reservation and began construction of St. Andrew's Chapel, a quonset hut which was flown in sections by helicopter into the canyon and there erected on a stone foundation. That year, Miss Laetitia Viele became resident missionary in Supai, initiating a program including Christian devotional meetings, first aid treatment, community social activities, and special educational and social activities for children. While the missionary rendered many services to the community and had an active program for children, the adult attitude toward Christianity generally remained apathetic. The Episcipal Mission was closed in July, 1956. Its building was leased temporarily to the United Indian Mission, an interdenominational organization. Mr. and Mrs. David Chambers have been the resident missionaries since that time and have had the active cooperation of the resident agent and [657] his wife, Mr. and Mrs. Victor Collins, in mission work. Under this leadership an adult program has been stressed and numerous adults are now active church members.

[562] Havasupai women are at present showing greater interest in Christianity than are the men. One young woman is a graduate of Cook Christian Training School in Phoenix and another is attending. Under the leadership of Mrs. Chambers, women attend a weekly prayer service and a teacher training class. Several of the women alternate in teaching the junior Sunday School class.

857 868 492 [553] older women ride astride. Their riding usually is restricted to trails leading out of Cataract Canyon, either to Topocoba Hilltop or to Hualapai Hilltop. However, there are a few women who ride horseback to fields located some distance from their homes. Two women were outstanding riders and ropers in their younger days, one of them reportedly having entered racing contests in competition with men at the Flagstaff, Arizona, Fourth of July rodeo.

Havasupai men are expert horsemen and are adept with a rope. A small boy plays with a lariat far more than with any other toy. A boy less than [524] two years old may imitate the handling of a lariat with a piece of string. A boy of three or four can lasso and bulldog, using a dog as a stand-in for a cow.

A few of the small girls like to play with a lariat and can handle one almost as well as do boys of the same age, although a girl is occasionally but not insistently admonished not to play like a boy.

857 868 [535] Small children of both sexes may be taken on their father's horse with him. Sometimes three or four children are carried at one time, one carried in front of the father with the others astride the horse's rump.

When the annual round dance is held, children as young as five or six are taken into the circle and are permitted to dance during the first few songs. In their play groups, children may try to imitate the round dance.

[526] Foot races are popular. At the annual Supai rodeo, children are separated into their appropriate age groups to race for prizes. One old man spoke of winning a footrace as a highlight of his childhood.

857 866 571 Adults say that their childhood play groups had leaders, but on the other hand when questioned about characteristics of children who were disliked, the primary reason given was uncompromising aggressiveness manifested in a determination to act as leaders. Older children charged with tending younger ones may turn this responsibility into a game of playing house so that removing a child from the mud, or picking him up when he falls is at the same time a discharge of duty and play-acting. Children acting as parents, either two girls or a boy and a girl, go about their activities in imitation of adult work, each one acting independently of the other, or acting cooperatively if they are pretending a group activity such as eating. It is suggested that leadership rests with certain members of age groups, rather than of play groups, for membership in the latter is not static. It appears that leadership is conceded to certain individuals because of personal popularity. Such leadership activities as may be assumed by a recognized leader are more likely to be carried out by suggestive, rather than by authoritative, means. This would conform with adult group behavior patterns.

834 she preferred to dress her daughter in waist overalls to discourage any
864 attempts by male playmates to pull her pants down or to make sexual overtures. She stated that she had warned her daughter against permitting any of the boys to disturb her clothing, and against exposing herself in a boy's presence. Nearly all little girls at present, however, wear dresses rather than overalls.

834 As a girl grew older, she was discouraged from association with boys
867 outside her kinship group. The pattern of isolated residence made it easy for parents to watch their daughters closely most of the time. Nuclear or extended families camped together during plateau residence, and, commonly, any close neighbors would be relatives. Their semi-nomadic isolation during much of the year afforded young people few opportunities to meet away from the vigilant eyes of parents.

867 Children of both sexes were taught from early childhood to beware of
609 strangers, the threat of enemy raiding parties being a constant worry. Girls, in addition, were expected to remain in the background when visitors, other than relatives, were present, particularly if boys their own age were in the group. Reportedly, the infrequent meetings between unrelated families resulted in extreme shyness of both sexes. The culture dictated that, ideally, a girl conduct herself with reticence and modesty.

[827] Boys, reportedly, were warned to refrain from sexual indulgence be-
[864] cause it would hinder proper growth and weaken them physically. When girls reached puberty, they were instructed that sexual relations would result in pregnancy. Spier (1928, 324) notes that 35 years ago adolescent
[114] girls remained under their mother's supervision, not being permitted to
[177] go about the reservation freely. Perhaps regular school attendance has broken down this restraint upon young girls. At any rate, girls of today come and go, alone or in small groups, much as they please.

574 Although a family formerly spent much of the time in solitude, families
857 assembled for economic or social occasions such as the pinyon nut harvest, cooperative hunting activities, intertribal trading, funerals, autumn and
571 winter story-telling, and, sometimes, visiting. Also families were close neighbors during the regular planting and harvesting season in Cataract Canyon. On such occasions, both on the plateau and in the canyon, play groups would almost certainly include unrelated children. There must have been opportunity on such occasions for young people to arrange secret meetings.

571 Concentration of tribal families on the reservation about 1895, and later at Grand Canyon, brought individuals into continuous group association.

182 girls, while they could not do so with their own Chiricahua girls because the
834 two tribes had a basic difference in attitude toward the subject. The Apache
836 informant thought the question had nothing to do with degeneracy or contact with white Americans, and that, as a matter of fact, the Apache tribe was the more disorganized of the two.

836 It seems reasonable to assume, in consideration of evidence at hand,
183 that the Havasupai, once settled on the reservation, merely continued the
178 practice of an established cultural pattern of sexual license. Reservation residence may have been a determining factor in producing a secondary change in the existing pattern, however, by affording opportunities for more frequent indulgence by each individual, and by permitting participation of a wider segment of the population in the general pattern. A change from restricted to somewhat preponderant sexual license is reflected in a similar change in public attitude toward such relations. While, formerly, public opinion rather vigorously denounced such behavior, present sentiment is milder in tone and less concerted in denunciation. This relative mildness of public censure apparently leaves members of the present younger generation undaunted in their preoccupation with sexual affairs.

894 Parents attempt to keep girls in ignorance of sexual relations until a
864 later age than they do boys. When a girl acquires information on the subject, her parents attempt to frighten her from experimentation by telling her she will become pregnant.

834 It was not learned whether small boys and girls experiment with each
684 other, but in 1952 it was reliably reported by two informants, one of whom was a witness, that a young man of 21 attempted to have intercourse with a cooperative little girl of seven. In the investigator's presence, about 10 minutes after it occurred, this episode was reported by a witness to a group of six or eight adults assembled to begin their afternoon gambling. In his absence the young man was publicly berated by the group which continued to gather. The youth in question, wayward, aggressive, and frequently in trouble for theft and other offenses, seems to be feared by many of his fellow tribesmen who report that he carries a knife and has threatened to use it on at least one occasion. When his father and uncle, who were among the
[626] gamblers, were told that they "ought to do something about him" both replied that they had chastized him verbally but in vain, and they were afraid to beat him because he would fight back.

834 Apparently, many girls are now initiated into sexual experience near
864 the time they reach puberty, their instructors probably being boys several years their senior. It is said that if a boy and girl are seen merely talking together on a trail, they are assumed to be having intimate relations in secret.

571 Girls usually go about in pairs or in groups of three or four. Their
834 demeanor customarily is shy and reserved, particularly in the presence of

boys and young men, or in a group of adults. Occasionally a boy may halt his horse on a trail to talk with two or three girls. Reportedly, it is assumed by any observer that the boy is carrying on an affair with one of them. 571 834

One informant stated that those girls who reach puberty before they are 12 years old, start menstruating as a result of having had intercourse with a boy. If this occurs, either or both of the girl's parents may beat her, but it is said that "today they don't beat her as hard as they used to." On the other hand, a boy is not beaten, but parents reprimand him for his part in the affair. Another informant denied that menstruation results from intercourse but verified that a girl's parents may beat her if they hear of her behavior. 841 834 684 827

Incidents of so-called rape involving teenage boys and girls occur occasionally, the participants often being a pair of boys and a pair of girls. Girls may loiter in appropriate places when returning home from a public activity after dark, and their protests are considered feigned when they are overpowered by the young men. Some parents make an effort to prevent their daughters from sexual involvement by escorting them home whenever possible. 684 834

One girl of 17 confided to me that she had been "out" with a particular boy on a certain night. "All girls have boy friends," she said. "A boy visits a girl's camp during the day pretending not to notice her, but they meet somewhere else at night. Each girl goes with a particular boy instead of changing around very often." A couple publicly known to have participated in an occurrence of "rape" four years ago, when the girl was 14 and the boy 16, later married.

Evidence indicates that virtually the entire male population keeps an eye on the young girls as they mature. Each year, one or two girls are considered the most pleasing in face and form. There is little doubt that the unofficial "Miss Havasupai" is under more than usual pressure from the male population. One such girl, following her initial popularity, is now labeled by at least part of her fellow tribesmen as a prostitute. It was reported that she caters to Indians and others in a nearby white community where she lives alone. 832 [548]

Behavior during Courting

At the present time, teenage individuals and young adults of both sexes flock to favorite swimming holes in the creek each afternoon. There, young couples may be seen privately conversing or enjoying water games together. Opportunity thus exists for them to arrange a rendezvous and to slip away separately during the afternoon, or to meet at another time. 584 834

It was noted that certain couples who engaged in conversation at the swimming hole in the absence of their elders, were ones reportedly carry-

Canyon to tend their fields. Men gambled for buckskins, clothing, blankets, and food. Women's stakes were usually smaller objects, such as beads or other articles of adornment. Men had a few games from which women were excluded, but they joined women in playing a kind of dice game which Spier (1928, 341) has described. Informants say that children did not gamble, with the exception of one game played by young boys. They shot arrows at a bundle of rags or willow bark thrown into the air, wagering their skill against their arrows. 525 [857]

Today, the dice game has been taken over by young people, and the group playing it may include boys and girls of eight or 10 years as well as young married or single men and women in their 20's or 30's with the majority of the players being teenagers. Each player bets a dime on a game, the winner taking the kitty and paying from it 10 cents to the owner of the dice.

Men continue to play a hidden ball game, using a yucca root ball, and following the rules observed by Spier (1928, 342) 35 years ago. The game is played infrequently, however. Small boys occasionally play this game also, and girls were seen practicing it, but adult women never play and apparently take little interest in watching it.

A standard deck of playing cards was used by gamblers in the early 1950's. A number of women and men were almost daily players while others joined in only occasionally and some individuals never played. During the summer of 1950, there were almost always two groups playing cards, but in 1951, for some undiscovered reason, players had dwindled in number so that only one group played most of the time. The card playing groups were almost invariably composed of both sexes, with the majority of players being women. The number of spectators of both sexes was usually two or three times the number of players, but these did not necessarily devote all their time or attention to the games in progress. Young boys raced their horses nearby or practiced calf roping and tying if calves were available. Young people of both sexes did a great deal of visiting and joking with one another or merely sat and watched what everyone else was doing. 525 177 [591]

In good weather, gamblers assembled at the public gambling place. Someone took it upon himself to furnish cards and more or less act as host for the game. In 1951, this person was an elderly blind man who, about 1:30 or 2:00 p.m., would arrive at the gambling place with a cow's horn upon which he blew a long, high note signaling the players to come. People started arriving about two hours later, and the games seldom started until a crowd had assembled. The blind man exchanged poker chips for money, and it was said that he received $4 to $5 each day as his profit. [732]

During the winter months, card games were held in the house of a woman who seldom played during the summer. Her house was larger than